



Kate & Philida
English GCSE High Grades: from 13% in 2016 to 32% in 2017

Our roles & backgrounds

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Jargon?
Questions?

Just ask!

Profile of Middlesbrough

- Very high deprivation
- 47% 5 GCSE A*-C \Leftrightarrow national average 59%
- Unemployment almost double the national figure
- Deprivation/FSM are massive indicators for low achievement of GCSEs

Impetus/Datalab study 2017

- The Middlesbrough constituency has the lowest level of literacy in England

National Literacy Trust research 2017

Profile of the college

- 13,000 students, across all areas of learning, esp STEM subjects
- Most on study programmes

- 1150 students retook GCSE English in 2015/16
- 13% scored GCSE English Grade C
- 50% regressed from D \Leftrightarrow which is similar to all-provider data

- English team demoralised after poor GCSE results, inspection Sept 16, and introduction of new GCSE specification. But, as it turned out, remarkably resilient!

Outcomes for 16/17

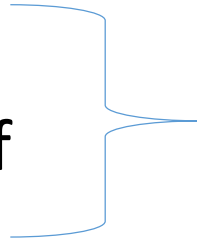
- 1000 retook the exam, 32% scored high grades
- 19% grade 4
- 9% grade 5
- 1.5% grade 6
- 30 learners got 7 or 8
- AoLs: 😊 H⪼ LTT ↔ 😞 Construction, Retail, Engineering

How did we do it?

Brainstorm steps and activities

What might you do

What have you done yourself



to tackle low GCSE performance?

5 minutes in small groups

Feedback

How we did it

1 Working with the team

- Communication with the teachers
- Take suggestions to our (supportive) senior management:
 - Work with teachers over time to develop capacity – start Dec 16
 - New head of department
 - Frequent feedback on performance and suggestions on how to improve
 - Give teachers freedom to experiment
 - Change in timetables and dedicated classrooms 17/18

2 Mechanics

Clear focus on impact

- Frequent, low-key walk-throughs
- Informal supportive feedback
- Analysis of walk-throughs informs staff training
- Staff training: practical advice & activities, new GCSE spec and levels
- Regular review of impact of new strategies with the team

2 Mechanics

Clear focus on impact

- Use of English blog to reinforce key messages and set tasks
- Open invitation to be observed and supported
- Formal evaluation of project effectiveness & adjustment
- Record of progress to support QIP and SAR

3 Strategies: which are most effective?

- Skills development, esp get learners to read and write more
 - Teaching language features
 - Assessment and target setting
 - The quality & frequency of feedback to learners
 - Accuracy of predicted grades
 - Reading at the learners' level \Leftrightarrow challenging reading
 - Analysis of written answers and free writing
 - Focus on SPAG
 - Sentence length as an indicator of quality of writing
 - Pace of lessons & stretch & challenge
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- Use of mock exams

3 Strategies: which are most effective?

- The quality & frequency of feedback to learners
- Skills development, esp get learners to read and write more
- Assessment and target setting
- Pace of lessons & stretch and challenge
- Focus on SPAG
- Analysis of written answers and free writing
- Plan challenging reading \Leftrightarrow reading at the learners' level
- Use sentence length as an indicator of quality of writing
- Accuracy of predicted grades
- Use of mock exams: overall overgrading
- Teaching language features

Examples of training on feedback

Advice to the learner

Furthermore the writer uses language to describe Brighton on that day by using imagery to describe clearly what the day in Brighton looked like.

Advice: 'Make it clear that you are referring to the question with key terms'.

How to make the most of marked work?

- Give practical advice on how learners can improve. Just writing 'effect' is not enough.
- Make sure you give really good feedback on Q5. It gets the most marks and does not require theoretical knowledge. Plus 16 marks for technical accuracy, which is under-exploited at the moment.
- If possible, indicate how far learners are off achieving the next band

How to make the most of marked work?

- Show your students examples of writing and get them to decide what is good and how to improve
- Get your students to work actively on their own work
 - Mark part of the work in detail
 - Ask them to revise the paper, using your comments
 - Get them to rewrite the piece, or parts of it
 - Ask them to use your feedback to decide on areas for development and rewrite

Good Reader

367 200 434 200
makes the short wave enthusiast resort to the

267 100 200 233 166
study of such seemingly unrelated subjects as

333 267 267 100
geography, chronology, topography and even

267 566 200 134
meteorology. A knowledge of these factors is

233 200 300 367 200
decidedly helpful in logging foreign stations.

Poor Reader

400 500 267 700 733 762 533 267 134
makes the short wave enthusiast resort to the

400 267 433 367 667 999 600 200
study of such seemingly unrelated subjects as

1,067 1,134 2,065 233 367
geography, chronology, topography and even

500 6,367 134 866 166 567 367 466 233
meteorology. A knowledge of these factors is

600 467 166 500 700 500 800
decidedly helpful in logging foreign stations.

Summary of key points

- Thinking about learning
- Find out what the learners can/cannot do and what they need to do to succeed
- Assessment (not just initial)
- Quality & frequency of feedback to learners
- Counteract the Dunning Kruger effect
- Get the learners actively involved

Targets for 17/18

Mix of 'continue with the good work' but also some new:

- Focus on skills development and learners actively working on tasks
- The impact of oral and written feedback/marking on learning
 - including strategies to make effective use of teaching/marking time
- Tag interesting and relevant reading texts to share with the team
- Use eg textinspector to tag for complexity
- Support weaker teachers & share good practice
- Develop closer links between English and vocational content
- Pace and learning opportunities across multiple levels,
 - esp for the more able learners
- Questioning techniques to engage and stretch all learners over time

End of story

- Any questions?
- Feedback
- Suggestion?

Sources

- <http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/news/7632> 86 of english constituencies have entrenched problems with literacy